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Finance & Stewardship

# Christian Missions and the Highest Use of Wealth

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# CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

AND

# THE HIGHEST USE OF WEALTH

BY

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OF AMHERST

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# CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

## AND THE

### HIGHEST USE OF WEALTH.

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The incarnation of the living God as the Redeemer of man has made it forever necessary that the man who would know God must see something of God in his fellow-men. In all ages the men whose hearts God has touched, whose eyes God has opened that they may see Him and make others see Him, have been men mightily moved in soul and heart toward their fellow-men. The nearer we come to God's view of human life, the purer and deeper and mightier will be our love of human souls and our pity for wasted, sinful, and benighted human lives.

#### LOVE OF GOD AND WORK FOR MEN.

There is a Divine revelation of the very heart of God Himself in the description Christ gives us of the scenes of

division at the judgment. Our Master takes as His own not those who selfishly cry, "Lord, Lord!" and boast familiarity with God's power and achievements of their own in casting out devils; but the men who have shown "the mind which was in Christ Jesus," and under the constraining power of Christ's love have served Him by serving "in His name" their fellow-men for whom He died. It is by the faith that is in Christ Jesus that we stand; but the absolutely vital, the indissoluble connection of faith with love and with works of love and helpfulness and mercy, is made startlingly clear in this revelation by Christ of the things which shall be made manifest at that day. It is only by living out a vital principle of life to its issues that we can come to know it thoroughly. True Christians are men and women who are bent upon reducing right theories of life to right living. Life-power and moral truth are the mightiest forces in the universe. In Christian character these two forces are combined. God is life and truth; god-

likeness worked out in life is character; into sound character has entered the "omnipotence of a principle," and the almightiness of God Himself is pledged to make character, which is vitalized truth, the mightiest power within the control of man. And since God is love, and God in Christ is the supreme revelation of that holy and infinitely attractive love which spared not His own Son that He might be just and yet might love us out of our sins into lives of holiness, Christians can never learn large lessons of God's love in Christ without sharing in Christ's love for their fellow-men.

THE TEST—OUR FEELING TOWARD MULTITUDES OF UNSHEPHERDED MEN.

Always, then, for the individual Christian, and for any body of Christians who are acting together, there is a supreme test in the question, How deep a concern do you feel for the welfare of the great body of your fellow-men? What are your feelings, what are your purposes, what is your attitude of soul to-

ward the benighted ones, our brothers and sisters, who are ignorant, debased, sin-burdened, and hopeless in the world?

Sharp and clear is the contrast between the spirit of the Pharisees and the spirit of Christ in this matter of caring for crowds of the common people. When their returning officers said, "Never man spake as this man speaks," and when "the common people heard Him gladly," the Pharisees waved aside the divine meaning of the message with that contemptuous phrase, the essence of selfish vanity and arrogant pride, "This people that knoweth not the law is accursed." But "the mind that was in Christ Jesus," the mind that dwells in every true child of God in richer fulness as the Holy Spirit shows him the things of Christ, is revealed in the words, "But when He saw the multitude, He was moved with compassion upon them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd." In those words speaks from the heart of God the loving voice

of the Good Shepherd; and "His sheep know His voice and follow Him."

This mind that was in Christ, this deep yearning love for lost men, has always marked the true Church. It began its growth among men with the growth of the early Church at Jerusalem, and it had to break its way through that intense spirit of exclusiveness which, with the Jewish Church, had been a cult for centuries. For generations God had walled in His chosen people, had separated them from the rest of the world, that their knowledge of Him and their realization of His presence might be intensified by exclusion. In the fullness of time, when the Word was made flesh, when the love of God was poured into the life of men through the life and the words of Christ, this spirit of love for all mankind burst the cerements of the old dispensation, and the Christian Church began its wondrous growth on earth. It came into life, it grew and prospered, under the teaching and guidance of the Third Person of the Trinity, the ever-living Holy Spirit,

whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and show them to His followers, who is with us here to-day guiding His Church. Peter first felt the power of this mission-spirit of love for all mankind. Then the heavenly vision came to Paul, and flaming with the spirit of Christ's love he went through all the provinces, fiery-hearted with the spirit of missions. With the growth of the Church this spirit has increasingly prevailed, the walls of separation between nations have been broken down by it. It is to the growing spirit of Christ, not to the evolution of a perception of a subtly selfish interest for the individual to be attained by the promotion of the welfare of the whole—it is to the spirit of Christ and not to “enlightened self-interest,” that we owe the deepening sense of the solidarity of the race which binds men together the world around.

In the history of the Church it is the men whose hearts have received this spirit in the largest measure whose names illumine the annals of the Church and the pages of universal history. In

their hearts was condensed so much of the thrilling force of Christ's love that heat passed into fiery rays of light, and they became beacons to men for all time. From Paul, longing to visit Spain, yearning over the Romans, melted with love for the Galatians, holding all Greece and all Asia in his heart, down through the glorious roll of saints and martyrs and missionary heroes till we reach the names of the missionaries whom we have seen in the flesh, and whom we love, hearts and lives on fire with the love of lost and benighted men have been the evidence of the spirit of life in the Church of Christ.

IN A LIVING CHURCH, ALWAYS A LOVE OF  
MISSIONS.

There can be no living Church without a glowing love for missions. Christ has made this very clear to us. In the glimpse He gives us of the judgment, in His parting words as He ascended, "Go ye and make disciples of all nations," and, "Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world," we find the very essence of His teaching, the

flowering of His spirit of service. To seek and to save that which was lost, was the mission that brought our Divine Redeemer from heaven to earth; and to seek and to save the lost is the Divine commission from the glorified Christ in heaven to each believer who looks up to a Divine Redeemer for direction in a life of grateful service.

What has this to do with the question of money and its use? Let us ask ourselves this question thoughtfully.

#### MEN AND MEANS.

As members of the Church of Christ set to do Christ's work in the world, assembled here in the interest of one of the most important agencies in that work of evangelizing the world, which is pre-eminently the one work given by Christ to His people to do in His name, we are brought face to face with the question of *the means* to carry out this important work. Here, as in every other important undertaking which is to influence many lives, *men* and *means* are the essential requirements. Men never

were offered to a praying Church in such numbers as stand confronting us to-day, saying, "We are ready, send us." Under the influence of the spirit of God, the immeasurable importance of bearing the glad tidings to the dark places of the earth has dawned upon young men and women in our land with a vividness and a power never before seen or known in the history of the Church. Do you who are past middle age remember the "missionary concerts" of your youth, when prayers were regularly offered that God would "break down the walls" that shut Christians out of China and Japan? That prayer has been answered. The Emperor of China has issued a royal edict calling upon the governors of his provinces to protect the missionaries against misrepresentation and violence, and declaring that the object of Christian teaching is to make men better. We have been witnesses of this marvellous change. We have seen Japan rise suddenly to highest standards in civilization and in government—a nation born in a day. Japanese Christians are set-

ting the Christian world an example of unity and loving fellowship in work. The testimony of all observers is that never was a great nation in a more receptive mood for Christian truth than is Japan to-day. In India there is a special call for laborers. Another generation of educated men, broken loose from the old faith, will soon be anarchic in morals unless Christianity shall supply the basis of morality in life. We need not raise any questions of a future hell; there will be hell let loose upon the earth unless Christian truth gets hold upon India, unless the love of Christ cherished in the heart shall more than make good the loss of restraints of the old order. In unharvested fields the grain, ripe and ready, falls to the earth in rich, decaying masses, ungarnered. Unless these years that are now upon us be used, the opportunity is forever lost. It is now or never, for India!

#### “TIME-VALUE” AND “PLACE-VALUE.”

Political economists talk of a “time-value,” which belongs to a commodity

that is ready precisely when it is wanted, like seed corn in spring, and of a "place-value," which is the result of the presence of an instrument or a commodity at the precise place where it is needed, and at precisely the time when it is needed. The time-utility of missionary effort just now is immense. Who can estimate the place-utility of Christian effort now in Japan and in India? Of Africa I hardly dare to speak. Africa, no longer the totally "Dark Continent," first pierced through by the rays of love and light where Livingstone carried his well-read Bible that rayed out life for him and made his path a trail of love and light until that night when he knelt alone beside his cot under the great tree in the wilderness and, kneeling, met his God; Africa, now slowly rising to a place in the world's history, but still as booty to be struggled for in a contest of diplomacy, if not of arms—to save and uplift Africa, what need of Christian giving, what a call for help from Christian America, who owes the heaviest debt to that continent

which is mother of the race, long fettered and beaten with many stripes, whose unrequited toil made "cotton king"!

We see these open doors. We hear these calls from perishing men. We see the "time-value" and the "place-value" of efforts now put forth for Christ. Loyal subjects of Christ our King, we see clearly the importance of these strategic points to be seized now for the advancement of His kingdom among men. The old walls about the isolated nations, which our fathers and mothers prayed to have thrown down, lie flat before us. The opportunity is ample. The need is pressing. The demand from the field is imperative. The loss of life, the loss of souls, is deadly.

#### WHAT HINDERS THE WORK?

In those monthly concerts, when the walls about China and Japan had fallen, the petitions began to take on this stereotyped form: "Lord, raise up *men and women who shall be willing to go* into these opening fields." The sacri-

fice involved in foreign mission work has always been immense, but the fruit of it has been abundant and rich. Partings with kindred and friends, departures into strange lands—these have always been essential to the propagation of the truth since the time when God said to Abraham, the father of the faithful, “Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I will show thee.” By such self-sacrificing obedience to God’s commands have new nations learned of that brotherhood of man which has no meaning, no power, save as all nations learn that they have a common Father, even God. Much of what is called the “spirit of the nineteenth century,”—this awakening of the world to the conviction that all men are of one blood, and that property in man is impossible—is the manifest result of mission work done by strangers who, for Christ’s sake and at God’s call, have sojourned in strange lands among despised peoples preaching peace and brotherhood through Christ. But the cost of leaving home and friends

and native land, the sacrifice involved in expatriating one's self and one's children, has always been so serious a matter to contemplate that those who love their own ease have always wondered when the call of God has been potent enough to carry His consecrated servants as missionaries to foreign fields. The supply of men and women willing to go has never been equal to the need of the field, seldom to the means at the disposal of the missionary boards. It has been taken for granted by the Church for the last two generations, first, that the walls that shut in mighty nations could not be broken down short of centuries to come; and then, that laborers willing to go could not be found in sufficient numbers.

FACE TO FACE WITH ANSWERED PRAYERS.

But what is *time* to our God when He wills to send His kingdom forward by a mighty unfolding into the growing season, into the flowering time! A thousand years are as a day with Him. He laid the walls level. He opened the

way. His will and wisdom brought in the age of steam. Railroads and steamship lines girdle His globe to make ready a highway for His messengers, "speaking peace to the nations." He sets a Stephenson and a Fulton, a Morse and a Bell and an Edison at His tasks when they know it not. Corporations of selfish men do His work, as heedless of the plan of God as are the stones which are framed into the mighty arch of the cathedral, or the liquid elements that are seized upon by the growing plant and drawn up into a place in the beauty of its unfolded blossom by a power utterly beyond their ken! Mission fields are open. The world is the field. All fences are down. A Christian Church, the Church of America, stands to-day face to face with its answered prayers. It is as if a throng of men and women had been standing in the ante-room of the King's chamber, half dreadingly telling each other in monotonous voices what they wished to ask for if the King would only give them audience. Suddenly the King steps in

among them and declares, "I know your wishes; you have them now!" And with stammering voices and uncertain gestures the would-be petitioners stand abashed in the presence of a royal Giver, whose readiness to give exceeds their readiness to receive!

#### THE STUDENT VOLUNTEERS FOR MISSIONS.

For a generation the Church has been praying for men and women who were ready to go. The Holy Spirit has tried the hearts and searched the spirits of young men and women at our higher institutions of learning. No one who has been among them, as I have been, and has seen this searching work of the Lord, can fail to recognize it as God's doing, and as altogether wonderful and like His mighty power and the gracious constraining force of His own love, that to-day over six thousand young Christians of America are volunteers for Christian mission work.

The years when students look out upon life from the mountain heights of youth are favorable to a clear vision of comparative values. While the wish is

eager to make one's life count for the utmost possible in the service of God by serving one's fellow-men, those whose eyes God touches that they may truly see, discern the truth that no other work compares in potent possibility for good with this light-bearing in dark places. Our "young men see visions;" and this is the fulfilment of God's glorious promise of rich blessing for any nation. They see that the Holy Spirit describes the highest object of a liberal education, when He speaks of one who "has the tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to him that is weary." And the Spirit of God has so moved upon the young people in the Church of God in this land, that as a class of Christians they say to-day to the Church of God, "We are ready to go; we are eager to try within this next generation to fulfil the glorious command of Christ and 'make disciples of *all* nations.' "

THE ALMIGHTY BANKER CALLS IN HIS LOANS.

Since the work is Christ's work intrusted to us, since the would-be

workers are ready and call upon our mission boards to send them; since the great, the rapidly growing wealth of this Christian nation is in the hands of Christian men and women of mature years; my brothers, what answer can we give for ourselves before the judgment throne of God, if this glorious work of preaching the Gospel of light to dying men is checked and dwarfed, and fails of its glorious possibility, because we who are God's stewards hold fast to God's money for our own selfish uses? There is a time when the Almighty Banker of the Universe calls in His loans! There is a time when the Master, about to return from far countries, Himself makes rigid yet loving inquiry of every steward concerning the talents, be they one or ten, intrusted to his use. Are we so using the money God has given us as to give to Him "His own with interest"?

But, some one will say, this is an unnatural view which you present. Christians are to use their money as do other men, subject to the laws of political economy and in accordance with the

general spirit of the time in which they dwell and with the standards that prevail in the grades of society where their lot is cast. Let us look at the question for a moment.

HIS PROPERTY IS A MAN'S "OBJECTIFIED  
WILL."

A man's property has been said to be his "objectified will." Mere things, which apart from man are impersonal and utterly outside of moral and jural considerations, enter into the domain of rights, of justice, of morality, through their relation to the will of their owner. The object into which you have introduced your will, which you have willed and worked to make your own, has become in a sense a part of you. There is a true sense in which the man who touches your property touches you. Property that is truly owned and used becomes in a sense a part of the owner and user. His intelligence permeates it, his will directs its use. Since wealth is often labor stored up in portable form, it has in it a man's life. It partakes of his personality. A man's wealth,

through his acting in it, becomes a personal force in social life which may be used for the noblest ends or prostituted to the basest uses.

No man can escape the fullest responsibility for the use he makes of his wealth, which is *potential power of service*. Every man holds all his powers in trust; for the use he makes or fails to make of each power, he must answer at the judgment-seat of God. Our divine Teacher has warned us that in wealth there is a subtle and dangerous tendency which leads it to seek to escape this law of service. Wealth, which should be a useful servant, seeks to become a tyrannical master. Christ in His warnings to His followers personifies but one power in the universe as likely to become a dangerous rival for that throne in man's heart and life which belongs to God Himself. The subtle power against which He thus warns us is Mammon, the love of money. Between the mad pursuit of gain and the service of the living God, He warns us that every man must choose. "Ye cannot

serve God and Mammon." The property that you have must be as fully and entirely subject to the law of the service of God in serving your fellow-men, as must your powers of heart and will and hand and head.

THE CONVERTED HEART INVOLVES THE CONVERTED POCKET-BOOK.

Talk of men as converted, as Christian men, who consciously and deliberately allow their property to be used for debasing and ruining their fellow-men! Imagine that a man's heart and will can be converted to the service of God, and his property remain in the service of the devil! 'Tis an utter impossibility!

The conversion that does not reach a man's use of his property is no true conversion. There is no truly Christian man who keeps an unconverted pocket-book or bank account. God's universal law of unselfish service is as supreme in the domain of material possessions—in the realm of that wealth which extends a man's power "to bring things to pass"—as it is in any other department of man's possible efforts. The unvarying

law of God, which attaches an obligation to every opportunity and places a duty over against every right, makes no exception of wealth with its vast powers of service. God has so ordered the social life of our race that no man can make the most of his powers of mind and heart and will until he employs those powers in the service of his fellow-men. This is an accepted law in the realm of mind and spirit. It is no less binding upon the power which material wealth places at a man's disposal. No man has the slightest right to say of his wealth, "It is mine, I may use it selfishly if I will." No man has arrived at a true conception of the responsibility that attaches to the possession of property, until his relations through it to his fellow-men fill a larger place in his views of life than does his ability by his wealth to serve his own selfish ends. No man is free to make an option as to whether he and his property shall come under God's law of service. He and his property are under that law, of necessity, as he is of neces-

sity a member of society and of the State, without his leave having been asked. In the use of his property, as of all his other powers, he owes steady allegiance to that law of service, by virtue of the solidarity of God's universe of law; and though in managing his property he may disregard this obligation, he can never escape it.

Now, wealth must be used for service according to its own laws. Wealth is productive only as it is used as capital—that is, as wealth employed in the production of new wealth, of new values. Since wealth is “the usufruct of skill, intelligence, and morality,” it places its owner under obligation steadily so to use it as to reproduce morality, intelligence and skill.

#### RESTRICTED SERVICE, TO GAIN WEALTH.

My brothers, Christian men who have put much of your life into money-winning, as you remember how much of time and effort have been withheld by you from more definite Christian work that you might concentrate yourself upon

money winning, is there not an especial call upon you that you redeem ("buy back") the time that was withheld from God's work by you while you were making money?

Take the case of a man who has won his wealth by years of concentrated effort. Often it is true that he has gained it by a constant withdrawal of his time and his strength from other occupations in which a generous, public-spirited man would like to engage. "Follow this line of study with me," said a friend in his early manhood. "No, business demands all my time," was the answer. "Take hold and help us in this effort at political reform in our city," said his public-spirited neighbor. "I haven't the time, business claims me." "Will you undertake part of the work of special visiting to be done by our church people this winter?" "Really, you must find some one else, my dear pastor, I am so pressed by business." It was by such restrictions of effort, by such exclusions of everything that did not tend directly to the winning

of money, that he made his way to wealth.

But clearly, God meant that man to cultivate his mind, to be a useful citizen and a Christian worker. In some way, then, the time and strength withdrawn from other duties and from public service should be given back to serving the public, to the enriching of the life of others.

LET THE LIFE INVOLVED IN WEALTH-WINNING  
BE EVOLVED IN THE RIGHT USE  
OF WEALTH.

The time owed to distinctively Christian effort, to work for the good of his fellow-men, may be in part made good, if the wealth into which his efforts and time were coined is used nobly and wisely. And while no giving for Christian work can take the place of personal interest in Christian activity, yet many men could do infinitely more by free and consecrated gifts of large sums of money than they now do by formal expressions of their sense of unworthiness and lack of effort in the past, unaccom-

panied even now by any large use of their wealth for Christ's cause.

"Redeem the time" that was withheld from God's service by you while you were making money. Redeem it, buy it back, by using your money conscientiously and generously for God's work.

If you have inherited wealth, let the time and labor that were *involved* in the rolling up and the transmission of a fortune, be *evolved* again in days and years of active philanthropic and Christian work, done by the Christian workers whom your money supports in mission fields.

"PECUNIA ALTER SANGUIS."

For every one of us, a part of his life-effort is stored up in money—in his possessions. It is the clear perception of this fact that gives significance to the old phrase, "*pecunia alter sanguis.*" In the money your life acquires is stored up the life-blood of your effort; not because gold is as precious as one's life, but because the power acquired by past effort,

stored up in money, enables you to set the efforts of others in motion to carry out your purpose and your will. How shall this life-blood of your past effort be kept pure and noble? How will you use it?

Wealth is concentrated power of service. Whether our wealth be great or small, it is still *concentrated* power of service. Is the wealth that is in the hands of Christians also *consecrated power of service*? Upon this blood of your past life, which has in it a life-giving power if used for noble ends, has there fallen the touch of consecration?

Is it not an awful danger of our times, the greatest peril that threatens professedly Christian people, that though we are Christians, we so persistently ignore all true ends in the use of our money? Is it not too much our habit of thought to regard only those as people of wealth who have much more money than have we? When we read upon page after page of the New Testament, the most searching warnings as to the use of wealth, is it not our habit to pass them

on to the very wealthy, whose fortunes far exceed the means at our disposal?

MAMMON MAY BE WORSHIPED BY THE POOR AS  
TRULY AS BY THE RICH.

Yet the essential nature of wealth does not lie in its quantity, in the amount of money at a man's disposal. The god Mammon may be worshiped with a man's whole heart, though his business transactions be petty and his savings small. Some rich men give to good causes small contributions, with a hypocritical allusion to "the widow's mite;" but our Lord bestowed His regal blessing upon the widow's mite *not* because it was small, but *because she gave her whole living* to the Lord. And in the countless warnings addressed by Him who is the Truth to His followers, cautioning them as to the deceitfulness of riches, as to the difficulties that those who trust in riches will find in entering the Kingdom of Heaven, the word used is one that does not lay stress upon great wealth—is one that may be used of very small possessions. The essential meaning of the word is *usable values*

*embodied in material things.* The warning is against trusting in material things for our happiness, our security, our power. Rather are we to trust in the living God, to use for the glory of God all the powers we have of body, soul and mind, every means by which we may bring things to pass in our life here. The warning is against the comfortable sense of safety that comes from "having means behind you," large or small. Whatever possession is capable of standing between a man's soul, and a vital living dependence upon God day by day, is to be suspected, dreaded, and used with fear and trembling as in the sight of a jealous God who has personified this love of possessions as His great rival in the hearts of men.

"DECEITFULNESS."

The peculiarity of riches, great or small, lies in their deceitfulness. They that trust in possessions cannot enter into the kingdom, even in their conception of what that kingdom is, and of what are its powers. And the awful

danger in dealing with riches is, that the material advantages they secure are so obvious, so universally recognized, that most men never get beyond these advantages in thought, desire, or fear. How lightly and apologetically we Christians are accustomed to deal with the awful emphasis which our Master has laid upon the perpetual, essential danger that lies in the use of wealth! Our Lord has spoken of this danger again and again, in words that stand out luminous with such lurid light as burns in his warnings against the unpardonable sin. Yet too often we hear these warnings tossed aside with a half smile, even by preachers of the Gospel who are accustomed to preach to the rich, as though they would say, "Of course, Christ said this, but what He meant was so essentially different from this that it need not for a moment make you gentlemen with large bank accounts uncomfortable, especially if you respond kindly to the special appeal I make this morning, and drop into the box a contribution a little larger than usual." Let

us, who believe in the living Word of the living God, take time to read together a few of the many utterances in God's Word which bear directly upon this point. Who can doubt that the iteration and reiteration of these warnings is, for us and for all Christians, profoundly significant?

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE WORD OF GOD.

"The rich man is wise in his own conceit" (Prov. 28:11). "Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee. So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:20). "The deceitfulness of riches chokes the word" (Matt. 13:22). "But they that will (to) be rich fall into a temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9). "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after, have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:10). "Let

not the rich man glory in his riches.”  
 “Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly” (the Greek is [*duskolos*] δυσκόλως, meaning literally that his diet and his digestion are such as to put his life entirely out of harmony with the heavenly life; it “goes against his stomach;” before he can enter in, he must be fed upon other food!)—“shall *hardly* enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 19:23). “How hardly shall they that have riches” (the Greek is [*chremata*] χρήματα, not necessarily great riches, but possessions enough to trust in) “enter into the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:24). “Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high-minded, nor trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate—that they may lay hold on eternal life” (1 Tim. 6:17, 18). “Go to, now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches are corrupted; your gold and your silver are rusted, and their rust

shall be for a testimony against you" (James 5:1-3). It is the rust, not the gold, that is the witness against them. Their means are not used for Christ, and the selfish rust on them "shall eat your flesh as it were fire." "There is a grievous evil which I have seen under the sun—namely, riches kept by the owners thereof to their hurt; and those riches perish by evil adventure" (Eccl. 5:13).

Can there be any question that these clear declarations of God cut sharply across the tacit assumptions of many of the Christian congregations of our times?

CHRIST TEACHES CHRISTIANS TO USE WEALTH,  
BUT NOT TO "TRUST" IT.

Yet this subtly dangerous power of wealth is entrusted to Christians. The parables and teachings of our Lord, time after time, hold up the property relation as the basis of a lesson in Christian living. The great majority of His parables deal with this relation in one form or another. Nothing can be clearer than that He holds every Chris-

tian responsible for the right use of all his possessions, however small, however large, they may be. For the right use of the ten talents and the two talents, there is the same commendation, the same relative reward; while the awful stress of contrast is laid upon him who had *but one* talent because he declined to use that one for his master. There is no one of us here present, then, who can feel that the warnings and responsibilities that attend the possession of wealth for a Christian do not concern himself. For the right use of all his powers of service, God holds each one of us responsible; and certainly the income that each one of us receives, the property that each one of us possesses, has in it latent power of service for the promotion of the Master's kingdom.

Now the divine law of political economy applies to this whole matter. Dangerous as is the use of wealth, God calls upon Christians to use all they have of it, be it little or much, in His service and for His glory. We sing in moments of devotion,

"All that I have I owe to Thee,  
I hold it for the Giver."

The proportion which each man of us is free to spend upon his own personal gratification, upon the personal pleasures of his family, upon the embellishments of his home, we cannot determine for each other; but every one of us is bound conscientiously to determine it before God, and under the searching vision of the Spirit of all Truth, whom no detail and no selfish motive can escape. The Holy Spirit in the heart of Christians can and does make "sumptuary laws" for us.

#### TO HELP MEN TO HELP THEMSELVES.

When we become convinced that there is in our hands as stewards money to be used for our absent Lord—for our Lord in bodily presence withdrawn, in spirit dwelling in us—then how gloriously does the scope of this mission work open out before us as we look at the money in our hands! Wealth must be used for unselfish ends, or it cannot be used as the Lord wills. To help others, we must help them to help themselves. The greatest work which Christian

wealth can do in the world is to bring men one by one under the sway of that one Supreme Personality, the Lord Jesus Christ!

#### HELP THEM TO CHRIST.

The only hope for men is in a close personal relation with a personal Saviour. Not in masses will men be lifted out of vice and sin. Society will be purified, institutions will be made better and kept better, only as men are drawn one by one to Him "Who has been lifted up." The great social discontent of our time, whose hoarse warning voice comes to our ear from every continent on the globe, finds its cause in the lack of a true center for each man's life in Christ. The pitiable, blind yearnings of socialism must touch the hearts of true Christians, because they are the gropings of men after that true brotherhood which men find only when they see the Fatherhood of God. Christ is the "Desire of the Nations," though they know Him not. The truest, wisest use of wealth is in promoting efforts to bring the Gospel of Christ home to the

hearts of the people, and to bring the people home to Christ. "They that trust in their wealth and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him." But the power of the Holy Spirit can transmute these money gifts, which we here and now before God pledge ourselves to make for the promotion of His kingdom, into Christian influences which will win souls for Christ. Oh, what a glorious thought, that dead and wasted years, which have been coined into money, if that money be laid at the feet of Christ, may be made to live over again, His spirit touching the dead past and quickening it into living service, as this money shall send to the dark places of the earth souls fired with the wish to preach Christ!

"Defer not charities till death," says Bacon, "for certainly, if a man weigh it rightly, he that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own." Be your wealth great or small, use it for Christ while you can yourself direct its

use, while you can yourself see and enjoy the mighty moral and spiritual values which are produced from the right use of wealth. Where is the man or the woman of large wealth who will set the world a Christian example of that free, cheerful, joyous giving which God loves—"God loveth a cheerful giver"—by taking a whole mission station to support from his abundant means, as a rich man keeps a yacht "for his own pleasure"? Who will thus prayerfully "redeem" large sections of his great wealth, of his coined time, by prayerfully using it for these noble ends?

We look for the speedy appearing of such great benefactions, as the responsibility of wealth comes to be more clearly felt. Meanwhile, let us see to it that by loving and free giving *until we feel it* in the sweet deprivations that we are willing to meet for Christ's sake, we each one of us show to the world something of that spirit that brings a blessing from the Lord, Who still "sits over against the treasury."

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